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# Hate CIA Week ♦ Two Views of One Book

J. G. Book

By WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.



COMES now this book called "The Invisible Government" by David Wise and Thomas B. Ross (Random House) and it turns out to be not a book by an extreme rightwinger (as we have been taught to call them) complaining that this or that organization actually runs the government's affairs; but a book by a couple of liberals (as we have been taught to call them) who complain that our invisible government is our intelligence complex, the ganglion of which is the Central Intelligence Agency.

The title of the book, I fear, is a giveaway to the essential cynicism of the authors. I make this judgment with considerable regret since one of them was my old college pal.

The thesis that the CIA is an invisible government is so palpably absurd that one must conclude that the book's purpose, notwithstanding its sanctimonious pretensions, is simply to make a little scandal, and make a little money.

The politically interesting aspect of the book is that the CIA comes in for a full-fledged attack from writers whose interests transparently lie not in pressing the defensive war against the Soviet Union, but in discrediting an agency of the government which is increasingly identified among knowing people as the principal gathering place of knowledgeable anti-communists.

I never thought those words would escape from my typewriter, because I have not in the past thought of the CIA as an impressive anti-communist organization.

Whether it is more accurate to say that the CIA stands out only in refreshing contrast to U. S. foreign policy, which during the past few years has become so relaxed as to be gaga about the communist problem, I do not venture to say.

The point is that precisely our determination to avoid a hot war against our enemies requires that we make diligent efforts to defend ourselves in the cold war—that we conduct effective psychological warfare; maintain keen intelligence operations; and help our friends fight back against the communists by means that, many of them, require great secrecy.

Secrecy. The authors of this book do an incredible thing, and I pray that, there being apparently no law which will bring home to them the disservice they have done to their country, some day their consciences will speak to them about the meaning of what they have done.

In their effort to achieve a lurid sensationalism they have actually named 26 persons who are CIA agents in deep cover: men whose names mean absolutely nothing at all to you, or to me, and who might just as well, for the purposes of this book, have been spoken about pseudonymously.

The same is true of various enterprises that are clandestinely backed by the CIA—they are, in the lingo of the trade, "blown."

It will no doubt occur to the wags to say that if a couple of enterprising American journalists can find out the identity of CIA personnel and enterprises, so can the Russians, and all that is proven is that CIA security procedures are not as tight as they should be.

Such an observation is naive: Americans are an open people who, in Winston Churchill's phrase, thrive on indiscretion. But it is one thing to reveal the true identity of someone to an American reporter. It is another to reveal it to the world at large. In the world at large there are communists.

The ostensible thesis of this book is that Congress and the State Department should more closely control CIA activities. The authors' concern is phoney, I believe.

Granted there are grave problems involved in the operation of a secret organization whose activities are outside the purview of the American people. But "The Invisible Government" is not a serious book about a serious problem of democracy, but a sensationalist book by authors who verge close to unpatriotism, and whose target suggests, in the shifting context of our time, that that other invisible government which controls the minds and the impulses of so many American Liberals, has marked the CIA as a major target of attack.

By RICHARD STARNES



WHO was the mysterious stranger who tried to buy up the entire printing of "The Invisible Government," a soon-to-be-published book that has the Central Intelligence Agency climbing the walls in anguish?

When the CIA was told that some informed persons charge that the CIA, itself, tried to swing the deal, it fell back on the explanation it most often uses: No comment.

Bennett Cerf, president of Random House, which is publishing the book, contributed considerably more words but little more information.

"Somebody from Washington," he said, chuckling in the manner of a YMCA secretary engaging in man-to-man rillery, "came to somebody here and suggested that perhaps—it was very amorphous, like a balloon, a trial balloon—they might buy up the entire first printing. I told them . . ."

"The mysterious stranger?" we inquired silkily.

"No, no," Mr. Cerf replied, bubbling with good humor. "One of our people, a salesman, I think. I told them we'd sell as many of the books as they wanted."

"As who wanted?"

"I honestly and sincerely don't know," Mr. Cerf replied.

But apparently (it's all very amorphous, like a balloon full of good natured hot air) the proposed purchase collapsed when it became clear that Random House would immediately order a second printing for public distribution if it were fortunate enough to sell out the first printing. "The whole idea was laughable," Mr. Cerf laughed.

Look Magazine, however, which printed excerpts from "The Invisible Government" in its June 16 number, readily conceded that the CIA had urged it to make changes in the text prior to publication. "The CIA approached Gardner Cowles (Look president and editor) and asked that some changes be made—things they considered inaccuracies," a spokesman said. "We made a number of changes, but we do not consider that they were significant."

The authors of "The Invisible Government" are David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, two young, energetic and respected Washington reporters. Neither will discuss for the record the spooky bibliophile who apparently tried to smother their book in money. Nor will either talk about the not-so-mysterious campaign to blackguard the book as a breach of national security.

But it is a fact that publishers, editors and authors associated in production of the book all use the same word to describe charges that the book reveals security secrets: "Nonsense."

"We understand," said one, "that the CIA claims the book compromised 26 or 27 agents by naming them. This is nonsense. We named no CIA agents that had not previously been named in public someplace else—in newspapers, printed transcripts of hearings, court records. Dozens of names were withheld voluntarily from the book, altho an enemy presumably would have had no more trouble in learning them than the authors did, simply because we wanted to lean over backward to avoid revealing any names not previously on the public record.

"It seems obvious that the CIA is trying to use national security to muzzle legitimate criticism—not to preserve genuine secrets. But for whatever reason, the CIA did try to censor, change or suppress the book. They obtained galley proofs before the book was bound—and reacted violently. But not a line was changed, simply because it was our firm conclusion that no security breach was involved."

Whatever the details of the invisible campaign to keep "The Invisible Government" out of the hands of the reading public, it seems to have backfired. Mr. Cerf cheerfully confided that the original first printing order of 12,500 copies had been increased to 17,500. But, ho, ho, ho, not as the result of the shadowy attempt by that rich, unnamed booklover from Washington to corner the market.